

NSC BRIEFING

dead 16 April 1957

BACKGROUND--POLISH SITUATION

- I. Gomulka's major problem: unification of faction-ridden Polish Communist Party.
 - A. His "national" program differs from Communist orthodoxy:
 - 1. Has invited peasants to abandon unprofitable collectives;
 - 2. Has given "large-scale control over work of government" to Polish parliament.
 - 3. Has allowed unprecedented freedom for Church.
 - B. But, in six months of rule, Party divisions have deepened.
 - 1. "Liberals" alienated by curb on press, inclusion of Natolin clique in Gov't.
 - 2. Natolins, on other hand, think other Gomulka actions liberal, want return to Stalinism.
- II. Thus, present stability of Gomulka regime rests not on Party solidarity but instead on popular non-Communist support.
 - A. This support attributable to genuine improvements.
 - 1. More food in shops.
 - 2. People generally feel freer to express selves.
 - 3. Soviet control weakened, with removal of army, security force advisors.
- III. But shaky Polish economy is Achilles heel.
 - A. Inflationary trends evident--due to wage increases, increased currency issue.
 - B. Unemployment rising.
 - C. Thus, any serious economic setback for Poland would foster public anti-Gomulka sentiment.